



NRCS Species for Plant Collections 2006

Sorghastrum nutans

Scientific Name: *Sorghastrum nutans* (L.) Nash

Common Name: Indiangrass

Morphological Characteristics

- native, perennial
- warm season
- rhizomatous
- plants are tall, 3 to 7 feet
- leaf blades 10 to 28 inches long, flat, narrow at base, sometimes hairy
- seed head panicle is golden bronze to yellow, 6 to 12 inches long, rather dense and narrow, spikelets paired, hairy, awns ½ inch long, bent, twisted
- adapted to deep moist soils from heavy clays to deep sands
- growth starts in mid-spring from short scaly rhizomes
- seedheads form late August and September

Conservation Use

Why collect this plant? Future ecotypes developed will benefit the following conservation practice standards: 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management; 342 Critical Area Planting; 562 Recreation Area Improvement; 550 Range Planting; 512 Pasture and Hay Planting; 327 Conservation Cover; 643 Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats.

Your assistance in collecting this plant helps support the NRCS conservation practice standards which are employed daily to conserve the natural resources of Texas!

Centers Requesting Seed

E. Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center

Knox City Plant Materials Center

(only from the 43 counties located within the North Texas Ecotype Project)

<http://www.tarleton.edu/~netp/index.html> see link for more information

How to Collect Seed

1. Identify native plant stands in your area. You can go to the following websites for helpful photos <http://plants.usda.gov> or <http://www.noble.org/imagegallery/index.html> or www.wildflower.org
2. Determine if seed is mature. Mature seed is typically dry and will easily separate from the seed head.
3. Hand strip mature seed by grasping the bottom of the seed head then gently pulling away from the base of the plant. Deposit seed in a brown paper sack. Collect seed from a minimum of 30 to 50 plants.

4. Label each collection as it is made so collections do not get mixed up. Information required includes: Collector's name, number of plants collected, location (parish, city, highway, and GPS coordinates), site description (soil type, slope, and plants growing in association).
5. Complete NRCS-ECS-580; Plant Collection Information Form and mail with collected seeds to the NRCS Plant Materials Center requesting the species.

Knox City Plant Materials Center
3776 FM 1292
Knox City, TX 79529-2514

E. Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center
3409 N FM 1355
Kingsville, TX 78363

East Texas Plant Materials Center
6598 FM 2782
Nacogdoches, TX 75964

Helpful Tips

Look for superior plants that display differences in color, height, or forage abundance and record observations. Differences in growing site or location should be made into separate collections if they are separated by more than 1 mile between sites.

Other Photos



Steve Hurst @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



Jennifer Anderson @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

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